

Ladies and Gentlemen, Honored Guests:

Thank you for inviting me to speak this evening and for the opportunity to congratulate your chosen recipients for this year’s “Citizen of the Year” award.

People living in our Town and County volunteer many hours to organizations, events, and charities, and through those efforts they help a community to grow and thrive.

I am delighted to share in this evening’s celebration dinner to honor and recognize two of those people here tonight. Diny and Roelof Scholten have worked tirelessly as a tag team example of community involvement, community spirit and citizenship.

While everything else may change, the value of citizenship remains constant. As a close-knit community we have a deep understanding of the definition of good citizenship and how it can contribute to the wellbeing of all who live in, and visit, Picture Butte and area.

When interviewed by the Sunny South News about receiving this award Roelof said, “This community stands together and is willing to support one another, regardless of what kind of background we come from.”

His statement rings true. Many of our community’s strengths lie in our differences and our individual heritages. In seeking out our common interests and working together for common goals we make our community thrive and grow. This is especially true for the two citizens we honour tonight.

Diny and Roelof have contributed to the fabric of our community for many years in many ways, such as:

- Giving their time to build and preserve our community history and our agriculture legacy

- Facilitating programs that encourage youth to be involved in the agriculture fabric that has built this community
- Ensuring the brave deeds of our WWII veterans are held safely in the memory of this community, and honoured
- Giving time and resources to many compassionate causes to help those in need, especially seniors and health services
- And lastly, but not least, lending a helping hand whenever a neighbor or the community is in need.

Roelof was also quoted in the Sunny South News article as saying:

“We were accepted in the community. They trusted us and they were willing to do business with us. We just want to, for the many blessings we’ve received in our lifetime, give something back to the community.”

I suggest that Diny and Roelof’s community spirit was encouraged by the community spirit that welcomed their family in the fifties. Mother Teresa said, “I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.” Our community’s welcoming participatory spirit ripples from one to another in all we do.

Diny and Roelof, we thank you for your example of good citizenship and for the many contributions you made in giving something back to the community. You have created ripples of compassionate involvement and encouraged our community’s success. On behalf of the Town of Picture Butte, I congratulate Diny and Roelof Scholten on receiving this recognition as “Citizens of the Year” for 2016.

Thank you.

Wendy Jones
Mayor of Picture Butte